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ABSTRACT

Nine articles provide perceptions of teachers, administrators, parents, teacher educators, and others on the mainstreaming of handicapped children. In "One Parent's View of Mainstreaming," a parent recounts her son's successful experience. "Justice is Affordable--Securing the Entitlements of PL 94-142" by M. Thompson and R. Peck, reviews compliance with the Education for All Handicapped Children Act especially in New York State and City. The article titled "A Rose is a Rose is a Rose" by E. Rothman gives examples of mainstreaming gone awry and blames educational bureaucrats for such misapplications. P. Wittschen, a beginning teacher, tells about "My Experience in Mainstreaming" and proposes that successful mainstreaming depends on student motivation, teacher support, class acceptance, and parental and administration support. P. Seidenberg writes about "Meeting the Challenge of PL 94-142--A View from a Dean's Grant" and stresses the importance of communication between university and field personnel (teachers, counselors, students, and parents). "Mainstreaming--A Teacher's Perspective (What's Going on Here?)" by H. Gollub and G. Flaherty describes a New York project to deliver supportive services and training to regular classroom teachers. B. Polifka, in "Deep in the Maddening Mainstream," gives negative and positive examples of mainstreaming and suggests ongoing programs to sensitize children and adults to the needs of the handicapped, better preparation of teachers receiving mainstreamed children, and consistent parameters for behavior throughout a child's program. The final article, "Putting It All Together" by H. Greene, stresses the role of the faculty and administrators of schools of education in making mainstreaming work. (DB)

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ISSUE TOPIC: Mainstreaming: Some Additional Perceptions from Classroom to Higher Education

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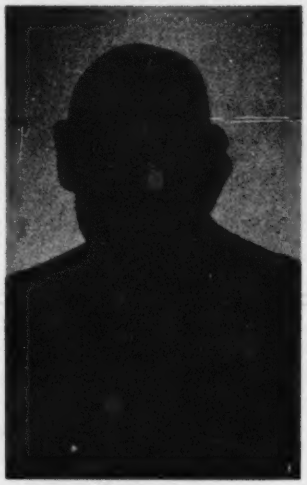

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The topic of "Mainstreaming: Some Additional Perceptions from Classroom to Higher Education," was chosen to provide a forum for personnel currently involved in varied aspects of helping to provide an education for exceptional children.

It is hoped that by the authors' sharing their particular perceptions, many of us will be able to take a closer look at the realities of the mainstreaming process. Thus a better perspective will be gained concerning those barriers that impede its implementation as well as those that enhance movement toward the least restrictive environment.

Unfortunately, the topic of mainstreaming has become a catchword spawning much conflict, much misunderstanding, and much misinformation.

If mainstreaming is to result in more desirable educational systems for children it will involve a great deal of change of classroom curricula, management procedures, logistics, and scheduling. Nevertheless, it is possible that the *sine qua non* will be the human factor. Consider the concept of the teacher who perceives himself or herself to be quite competent having earned the respect of colleagues and is suddenly confronted with the threat of failure. No program will succeed unless we attempt to share in the feelings or try to understand the fears of teachers so that we can provide them with ongoing supports, and otherwise create a school environment that will guarantee a reasonable degree of success. Any viable program will require all school personnel to achieve an adequate knowledge base not only from the literature but also from those who have been at the cutting edge of the mainstreaming process. Administrators, support personnel and teachers must be in a position to remove the mystique from the supposedly new panacea and realistically ascertain the process that will enable mainstreaming to function successfully for which type of youngster under what circumstances.

It is for these reasons that I believe the varied backgrounds of the authors of this issue will do much to enhance the understanding of the complexities, the barriers, as well as the credible goals and possible promises of our attempts to increase options for children, while affirming the value of their diversity.

One Parent's View of Mainstreaming

Joan Harrington
Parent of two handicapped children, one learning disabled child and one brain injured child.

When I was asked to write this article, I was at once gratified, and mystified. Why would teachers and special educators be interested in how one parent felt about the mainstreaming process for her child? In reflecting on this, however, I realized there were many valuable lessons about our experience for teachers and other parents to be aware of.

In 1973, when our child was first evaluated by the Committee on the Handicapped and found to be in need of special educational placement, we were relieved and grateful that he would be able to receive an appropriate education. We were also very sure that before a long period of time he would be mainstreamed, and we saw that as one of the goals of his special educational placement. Our child began to grow in a myriad of ways in his new class. He grew academically, socially, emotionally and became for our family a real person in every way possible. His speech skills improved, and with that improvement came a sharing for us with him of his school activities, their triumphs and tragedies.

Something else was also happening. Almost imperceptibly, his being mainstreamed was becoming less important to us and the fact that he was being educated adequately and to his full potential became our focus. We spent three or four years going along enjoying his accomplishments without being overly concerned that he was not receiving any mainstream experience at all. However when he turned 11 years old we again approached his teacher to discuss a limited mainstreaming plan.

The conversation was disturbing. His teacher talked about the great gains he had made and did not seem to understand why we would want to jeopardize all this just for a little bit of interaction with other students. We discussed our son's social immaturity and explained that we felt that there were great benefits for him in a regular setting for a time each day. His teacher while admitting that he would probably be able to keep up academically said that she had brought him too far and was not about to risk any regression and she was sure we felt the same way. While we were pretty sure we did not feel the same way, we were also not sure enough of ourselves to insist. Yet in our hearts, we remained convinced that the benefits of the mainstreaming experience far outweighed the risks. We decided to allow the matter to rest for 3 months until he graduated and went on to Junior High School, but to have mainstreaming goals included in his IEP.

Well, when our son entered Junior High School, we began the preparations for his mainstreaming. It was determined that he would be mainstreamed for reading and math. The first step of the process, it seemed very logical to me, was that the parents of the children who were to be mainstreamed be given the opportunity to sit down with the mainstream teacher and discuss our expectations. Before we met with the teachers, the parents met together as a group to discuss what we hoped the results of mainstreaming for our particular children might be. For the parents it was a time to be realistic to face up to our children's strengths and weakness, to realize that like every so-called "normal child" they had limitations but that clearly they also had potentials and that was the purpose of the mainstreaming. Focus on their strengths and potentials and give them the opportunity in a carefully controlled setting to test and experiment like other children.

How can we explain to a mainstream teacher our hopes and how can we work together in a non-threatening situation, so that our children might have this experience. The first step was to sit down with the teacher to discuss our children. Yes, my child has a different learning style; I do not expect him to achieve the same things academically as everyone in the class. I recognize there are different levels in the class and expect he will fall somewhere in between but I also realize that he lives in the real world and will have to function in a real world.

On that score he will not be judged as much on how he reads and writes as on his relationships with his peers. I would hope that the mainstream experience will give him the opportunity to interact with children his own age, to realize that certain behavior is acceptable, and that other behavior will draw attention to him. Our goal is not that he achieve academically just like all your other students, but that he have the experience. We hope that while you keep in mind that he may have a specific learning deficit that you treat him just like everyone else with the same expectations for turning in his homework and class behavior. After having satisfied ourselves that everyone was very well aware, the mainstreaming plan for our son was agreed upon.

I cannot describe a parent's feeling at this point. Every parent has hopes and expectations for their child. To see that your child has surmounted so many hurdles and is now ready to embark on the course

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Justice Is Affordable Securing The Entitlements of PL 94-142

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American history can be characterized by successive struggles to gain freedom and equality. Settlement of the continent was spurred by groups seeking relief from religious persecution. The nation was born with the promise of secure civil rights and civil liberties. However, the promise still overlooked many groups such as Blacks, women, Indians, the poor and the handicapped. For each of these groups, the road to successful integration into the mainstream of society has been, and remains, long. The battles most prominently have been waged in the legislatures and the courts.

Our schools have never been immune from discriminatory policies and practices, nor the struggle to redress them (Note 1). For handicapped children, the fight has been against exclusionary practices that exempted them from compulsory school attendance laws or placed them in separate schools or institutions with few, if any, educational functions. While several states and a number of local school districts developed exemplary educational programs for some disability classifications, progress on a national scale was not achieved until the recent enactment of landmark federal legislation.

In 1973, the United States Congress passed legislation prohibiting discrimination based on a handicapping condition in programs receiving federal financial assistance (Note 2). Congress later supplemented these rights with the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (PL94-142), firmly establishing the right of handicapped children to a free appropriate education with their non-handicapped peers to the maximum extent possible. The legislation also contained innovative requirements for parental involvement and procedural protections.

New York City had a reputation as a progressive and innovative school system, having developed a special education program early in the century. However, what was ahead of its time as recently as a decade ago is often obsolete and regressive today. Special Education Services in New York City now take place under the influence of three major developments: *Lora v. Board of Education (1975), Jose P. v. Ambach (1979),* and a newly reorganized Division of Special Education.

Around 1946, the city school board established "special day schools for the socially maladjusted and emotionally disturbed," designed to correct behavior problems so that the assigned students might return to regular schools. In June 1975, a number of parents brought a federal class action lawsuit on behalf of Black and Hispanic children discriminatorily assigned to the special day schools. They alleged the schools had become segregated through the use of due process procedures by white parents to gain private school placements at public expense while minority parents remain ill-informed of their rights to prevent improper placements. Vague criteria and discriminatory practices had led to disproportionate use of the special day schools for minority children. It was further asserted that the schools lacked proper facilities, staff and instruction and the due process and re-evaluation requirements of state and federal law had been violated by the special day school placements.

After an extensive trial, a judgment was entered in favor of the plaintiffs three years after the lawsuit was commenced. One year later, the court issued a comprehensive order designed to remedy the violations, including the development of a parents' rights booklet, an in-service training program for all school personnel on the special education laws, and of non-discriminatory criteria and procedures for the evaluation of emotionally handicapped children. While the U.S. Court of Appeals reversed the Federal District Court's finding of intentional racial discrimination, the relief ordered continues.

Jose P. v Ambach (1979) was brought in February 1979 on behalf of all handicapped children whom the New York City school board had failed to evaluate promptly and then place in appropriate classes. At that time, about 14,000 children were awaiting evaluation or placement. Large numbers of children awaiting educational assessments and placement in programs have been a major problem in the city for nearly a decade.

A judgment rendered in December, 1979, ordered the Board of Education to eliminate the illegal waiting lists by April, 1980, a goal still not achieved. The court order also established multidisciplinary evaluation and support teams in every school, greater opportunities for qualified handicapped students to be educated in regular classes with non-handicapped students, greater efforts to identify handicapped children needing special services, greater parental involvement in the overall decision-making process, a better means of informing parents of their rights and annual reviews of each student's educational program. One major innovation mandated by the court is the provision by the multidisciplinary teams of "Preventive Services," or support services to children

in mainstream classes without the need to label those children as handicapped.

Accompanying the litigation has been reorganization of the special education program structure in New York City schools to more adequately conform to the mandates of PL94-142 by insuring a continuum of services with heavy emphasis on support to the regular classroom teacher, increased use of resource rooms, and programs organized around children's functional *needs* rather than handicapping *labels*. Conceptually, the new special education administration has abandoned the traditional multi-bureau structure (with ever-expanding administrative layers to supervise ever-expanding program categories), in favor of a structure which recognizes that neither children nor rational programs can be organized around narrow medically-defined labels.

The reorganization requires heavy investment in special education and teacher training, maximum cooperation of and increased support services to mainstream education staff, strengthened communication and program planning between special education and mainstream staff and, above all, a commitment by every member of the education community to understand the *special value of every child and extend the benefits* of PL94-142 to the entire school organization.

PL94-142 should be seen as a *reaffirmation* of basic education principles, classrooms should be organized to adapt to the widest diversity of children's developmental needs, learning modes, and timetables; no child should be excluded from the mainstream school environment solely on the basis of a handicapping condition; every child is special and deserves an individualized education plan suitable to their developmental needs (Note 3); parents should be respected as teaching partners and participate fully in the education planning for their children; due process safeguards are constitutional remedies designed to insure the equitable provision of these basic entitlements and are part of the very fabric or our governmental system of checks and balances. Further, such safeguards are not unfamiliar to the school system. They have long been a fundamental part of every professional union contract and assured to parents and students in situations where education services are interrupted by school personnel.

Why then is there such a growing backlash against providing services to handicapped children and what can we, who have long sought equal education opportunity for the handicapped do about it?

First, PL94-142 has never been fully funded by the federal government. Many prominent city and state officials have publicly challenged the federal government to honor its obligations. This challenge would be much more credible and effective, however, if these same officials vigorously exposed to public analysis and debate the cost to education of the federal and local government's major non-human service investment, tax shelter, and lax tax collection policies (Note 4). Instead, some of these officials find it more politically convenient to now challenge the merit and affordability of the law itself. We must use every opportunity to broadcast the fact that our federal, state, and local governments can make different policy choices and investments, and can take corrective action against administrative mismanagement and tax incentives that deny essential services to our children and their families. Our legislators have access to this information and so does the media. We ourselves can no longer afford to only write and talk about principles of justice or improved teaching theories and practices. We must recognize that future funding of PL94-142 is under attack. We must, therefore, arm ourselves with those facts and figures that will enable us to prove to our neighbors that access to equal opportunity for our handicapped children is affordable and is no threat to their livelihood.

Second, special education will face difficulty in winning the support of taxpayers who have seen too few tangible gains from the billions of dollars federal and state governments have poured into existing compensatory education programs as a whole. Too often these monies have flowed without rational program planning, effective monitoring and a sound system of accountability. Funding helped employ many adults (in numbers, we believe that could not possibly have been absorbed by the private sector) but has *not* significantly reversed the nationwide decline in education achievement. Unless we marshall our forces to assure these dollar allocations support a *quality* education for our children, the public will be an easy prey to those who argue for quick tax cuts and tax incentives to special interest groups who claim the ability to generate more profitable dividends from the public's tax investment (Note 5).

Third, the widely disseminated theories of prominent educators and social scientists have too frequently fostered and bolstered public perceptions that *special needs or handicapping conditions reside solely in the child or the family.*

Instead of the present New York State regulations, for example, which define a handicapped child as one who cannot profit from regular education, we would suggest slightly modified regulations which define a *school system as handicapped* and requiring special education to the extent it fails to adequately educate growing numbers of its children.

In New York City, the Board of Education itself has acknowleged a 45% high school drop out rate. The majority of our city's school children cannot read, write, or compute adequately. At the same time, school administrators and teachers are concerned about "mainstreaming" handicappped children, the mainstream classroom itself needs a major transfusion of remedial supports. We would urge that these same officials, therefore, think instead of "mainstreaming" special education services to enrich the school environment by stimulating creative curriculum development, strengthening teaching skills, injecting support personnel in the classroom, and nurturing the social development and value clarification of children.

Fourth, teachers in classes of 30-36 children are natural prey to backlash arguments against mainstreaming children with special needs into their classrooms if teachers are not equipped with adaptive teaching skills and support personnel. The school system has historically answered these fears by *pulling out* and segregating thousands of children who are "different" instead of *putting* into the classroom those teaching resources that will foster a classroom environment sensitive to a wide universe of children's special developmental needs and backgrounds.

There is now a movement that may help reverse this unfortunate schism and help us realize PL94-142 and special education as a benefit to all our children. As alluded to earlier in this article, New York City school personnel are trying to organize special education services closer to the school and classroom level and bring special education administration, teaching, and support personnel into closer partnership with and support of mainstream school and local district staff. The Central Board of Education, we suggest, should define its primary role as a program monitor and evaluator, a resource in the areas of curriculum development and staff training, an appellate and mediating body to assure program quality and compliances and an administrator of services for only those low incidence severely disabled children for whom a regional service delivery organization is more cost effective. To the extent the new organization for special education is carefully planned and implemented, to that extent will special education cease to be viewed as a burden imposed on the local school community. We cannot continue to ignore the local school's role in educating all children. Most special education programs are housed in our community schools and resources must be mobilized to support the *reality*. We must convey that message to our educators and public officials.

Conclusion

Despite public statements and editorials to the contrary, laws and regulations that seek to secure education entitlements to those children from whom these entitlements have historically been denied are implementable.

In this article we have tried to demonstrate that PL94-142 is affordable if we choose to make it so, that it reflects the historic principles of public education, that it can enrich the lives of all children, that it can stimulate better mainstream classroom teaching and management if properly implemented and supported as an integral part of the local school organization, that it is part of our society's continuing struggle for equal justice under the law, and that we all must invest the time to carry this message to public officials, to the media, to educators, and especially to our children.

References

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Notes

1 Desegregation: Brown v. Board of Education 1347 U.S. 483, 1954.
Education Rights of the Handicapped: Mills v. Board of Education, 348 Fed. Supp. 866 (DDC 1972), Park v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 334 Fed. Supp. 1257 (ED Pa. 1971).
Education Rights of Non-English Speaking Students: Lau v. Nichols 414 U.S. 563, 1974.
Sex Discrimination: Cannon v. University of Chicago, 99 S.C.T. 1946 (1979). Title IX 1972 Education Amendments.
Discrimination Based on Race, Creed, or Color: Voting Rights Act of 1965, Civil Rights Act of 1974.

2 Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

3 New mainstream pedagogical techniques and theories, such as Mastery Learning which is being adopted by more and more of our nation's school systems, recognize this.

4 For example, though PL94-142 authorized the Federal Government in Fiscal Year 1981 to assume 40% of the local school's average child expenditure mandated under the law, actual appropriations have been frozen at 10-12% for a total of $874 million or less than $1 dollar out of every $3 dollars authorized. Yet as this article is being written, the Senate just voted 73-1 for a military budget of $161 billion which is expected to go higher in the next few months to accommodate the Presidents $1.3 billion request for naval and air operations in the Indian Ocean, expenses related to the new Rapid Deployment Force, pay increases for military personnel and additional fuel costs. Hidden from the public as the military budget climbs astronomically are huge mismanagement costs, our present overkill capacity, our inability to maintain present equipment operable, and open ended defense contracter profits.
The General Accounting Office, as another example, has estimated that at least *two billion dollars* could be generated if the Internal Revenue Service matched the 1099 tax forms to the unearned income reports submitted by banks to the Federal Government. Though mandated by law, the IRS does not now compare interest receipts to tax forms.
The authors wish to thank the Children's Defense Fund, New York City Councilwoman Ruth Messinger, and Daniel McCarthy of the Municipal Research Institute for the above citation.
Since much of our tax revenues come from business corporations, their successful and effective management practices have a direct bearing on their profit and loss, and consequently the amount of taxes owed to the government which could help support essential human services. In a recent article in the *Harvard Business Review*, July/August 1980, Managing Our Way to Economic Decline", by Robert Hayes and William Abernathy, the authors documents the poor productivity and investment performance of American industry.
The 1970's has seen a period of constant high unemployment. With every percentage point increase in unemployment above 3%, the government looses 15 to 20 billion dollars per year in revenues from business and personal incomes as well as the cost incurred from unemployment benefits. These revenues again could support needed human services including education programs for our handicapped children.
Right here in New York City, an examination of real estate tax abatements alone shows that over $100 million a year in taxes is forgiven to luxury hotel interests in midtown Manhattan at the same time we are told human services including education are bankrupting the city.

5 While we believe that the Federal Government should fully fund programs under PL94-142, we do not believe that partial funding is an excuse for less than full enforcement of the law's entitlements. The Federal Government gives millions of dollars in aid to localities under a range of education programs, and we support its right to insist that these monies are spent in a non-discriminatory manner. Moreover, we believe the government must fully enforce those regulations designed to insure local compliance.
Ironically, the same officials who pressure for continued and expanded federal and state funding for education are often the most vocal opponents of regulations established to monitor the use of these funds and assure non-discriminatory compliance. Proper regulatory enforcement can assure advocates and taxpayers alike that federal dollars are being appropriated in the manner the law intended.

A Rose Is A Rose Is A Rose

Esther Rothman, Ph.D.
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I view mainstreaming with very mixed feelings. While I believe the intent of the law is a good one, while I extoll the general concept that integration is better than segregation in most circumstances, that handicapped people should live and learn in the environment that is as least restrictive as possible, I know that what should be happening isn't, that intent has given way in most cases, to faddism at best, and hypocrisy at worst, and that under the guise of "doing all the right things," educators are in fact most often "doing all the wrong things." And, the children suffer.

Let's take a few examples. Ruth is in a special class in a regular junior high school for emotionally disturbed children. She is 15 years old. Behaviorally, she has severe temper outbursts, cannot tolerate frustrations, is hyperactive, and a compulsive eater and talker. Her psychological evaluation indicates she is depressed, has poor ego controls, and an even poorer self concept. She has a severe reading problem. Her diagnosis: passive aggressive personality with depressive trends and possible organicity. She spends all day in a self-contained classroom and is "mainstreamed" for art in which she shows some aptitude and interest. Because she demands so much attention in the regular classroom, the art teacher dreads her entrance because she provokes fights with other children and is so demanding. The other children make fun of her which only stimulates her into further loss of control. Yet, because she is interested in art, she is "mainstreamed",—ignoring the first tenet of Public Law 94-142 and good common sense, and that is that mainstreaming should be put into practice *when possible.*

"When possible" means whenever the child is able really to function with peers in a like manner and when the classroom teacher can teach the special child within the structure of the regular curriculum and methodology. The regular teacher should not need to modify instructions or classroom procedure any more than it would be modified for any so called "normal" child. Unfortunately,—ask most teachers who accept special children in their classrooms,—this is not the practice. "When possible" has come to mean "make it possible even when it isn't and even when it is not in the best interest of the child." The result is at tremendous emotional, psychological and educational cost to the children involved, the "mainstreamed" and the others. The teachers working at tremendous odds to "make it work" are frustrated and most often powerless to change what they generally know is wrong.

I said at the beginning that I believe, generally, that integration is better than segregation in most circumstances. Obviously, if I am to be consistent, the reverse must also be true. Thus, I do believe that when one suffers from a contagious illness that segregation for a time is best, that when one is in need of intensive surgery a hospital is best, and that when one is in dire need of a special service that can only be best delivered in a specialized, segregated way, then that segregation is best. For a time. That time may consist of a few days, a few weeks, a few years,—maybe forever, hopefully not,—but maybe. Thus, I would not like to see severely and profoundly retarded children in segregated units for their entire lives, but the possibility exists that for some children, this may be the only choice possible. This does not mean I recommend institutional care for everyone, or that segregated care need necessarily be institutional, nor that institutional care need be equated with the horrors of a Dickensian orphanage or a Clifford Beers's (1935) mental institution of years back. I merely state, that if segregation is necessary for intensive care and treatment for a specified time, whatever that time may be, then it should be provided. If I needed brain surgery, I would not want it in an outpatient clinic or at home.

Unfortunately, what happened to Ruth, is what is happening to many children. They are not receiving the segregated services that will give them what they need for the time that they need it. They are damaged by "mainstreaming." Ruth, for instance, needed the total milieu of a day treatment school, not the segregation of a special class in a regular school where everybody knew she was "nuts" anyway and where in fact, she lived up to the role that was expected of her.

Now, of course, the answer to Ruth's plight is that Ruth should never have been forced to fail; that she never should have been placed in a special class in an otherwise integrated school, that she should have been placed in a total therapeutic milieu—and that a special school should have been the treatment of choice.

But not so—not so. The way the law is being

channeled, children are forced to go through the sequence of mainstreaming before they receive the treatment of choice, especially if that treatment of choice is a segregated unit like a special school. It's like being treated with an aspirin when one needs an antibiotic. How damaging!

Then there is Jose. Jose is fourteen years old and is totally deaf. Jose used to be in a school for the deaf where he was able to learn some speech. He was adjusting well. Then, because he did so well he was mainstreamed to a regular school with special access to a resource room. Jose was entirely overwhelmed by the magnitude of the move. He did not understand what was taught. He could not socialize. Whereas before, he had been segregated into specializing learning, now he was almost totally isolated—but integrated, of course. But at what cost to him? He was no longer getting what he needed—specialized teaching.

It seems to me we are back in education where we were 50 or so years ago. Children were lumped in one class, and no one was "special"—no handicapped child survived—they were moved out of the mainstream entirely—separated, not in school, but *from* school, and they were in diaspora until the time came when special education was discovered and special classes were formed within the schools. The "dummies" or the "retarded" were early defined. So were the crippled and the sickly. There were even children in need of "open air."

Admittedly, during this time of "growing pains" many children were harmed by the segregation, and many children were segregated who should not have been. For instance, the largest category of handicapped children were the retarded, categorized by finite numbers of IQ's. Seventy-five IQ and a child was placed in a special class for the retarded—without benefit of due process, of course. An IQ of seventy-six—and the child was miraculously within norm—no special education for that child at all. And both groups of children were done a disservice. As if a number could explain an educational process or the needs of a child.

Certainly many children were hurt by these classifications. Yet, I am also certain that many children were helped. Many children who would have been discarded as uneducable because they could not learn in the regular classrooms, did in fact, learn in special education classes. And some great teaching did take place. We all know that—but rightfully, we moved on from those days and looked for clearer delineations, finer demarcations for selecting children. But somehow, no matter how we progress, we seem clearly to forget that children remain the children no matter what we call them. Under our new laws, for instances, we are developing more refinements of classification, and even while we are committed to non-labeling, we are labeling more than ever. In one state, for instance, we have classes for "chronically disruptive." Now what kind of a diagnosis is that?

It is my belief that treatment is dependent upon etiology and etiology is generally described by a diagnosis. Thus, determining a diagnosis determines treatment.

A class for children with visual disorders, for instance, has within its nomenclature, the concept that we know and deal with that disorder—if not cure it. Thus, a class for children who have cerebral palsy implies an approach to cerebral palsy, an approach that is based in a clinically definable and defined syndrome.

But what does "chronically disruptive" mean? That a child is blind, deaf, epileptic, brain damaged, spoiled, "bad," "brattish,"—what? And how do we teach that child? Is that child "emotionally handicapped"—and what does that mean? Since when is "emotional handicap" a definable diagnostic group? It becomes meaningless to therapists in terms of prescribing treatment. It also becomes meaningless to teachers. Too often it means the child won't conform to the rules laid down by the teacher and that the child won't behave in the way the teachers want that child to behave. In itself, therefore, "emotional handicap" means little. It may mean nothing more than that a child with such a label may have "an abusing teacher." Surely, we all recognize abusive parents. Somehow, we never think that teachers are often parents too, and perhaps one and the same. Nevertheless, only when "emotional handicap" gives something of the process on how the child functions in various situations, of what the child's needs are, and how the nurturing adult can attempt to meet those needs, can special education for that child have any meaning. Under those conditions, where mutual understanding springs up between child and teacher, when both understand the goals to be accomplished and the using of those goals, can a child be taught. Then, under those conditions, it may not matter whether a child is "mainstreamed" or not.

Mainstreaming, as I said earlier, has become a fad. It should not, under any conditions, be confused with "least restrictive environment." The concept of "least restrictive environment" is surely a noble one. It simply means that a child should function in the most open environment possible as far as it is possible to do so and still meet that child's educational and mental health needs.

Too bad, that the phrase "least restrictive," which is the term of the law, changed into "mainstreaming," the educational word. It would seem that when educators get into legal waters, the waters get muddy indeed.

Surely, the law can definitely be effective. It surely is a necessary law. Due process is necessary—so is the right of every handicapped child to an unrestricted education. However, when a law is made inoperable by practice one must look for reasons.

So the questions to be asked are these. Are educators ignoble or ignorant or possibly both?

Why do educators call it mainstreaming when they place whole groups of children, not in the least restrictive environment, but only in segregated units

(Continued on Page 24)

My Experience in Mainstreaming

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Not too long ago, I started my teaching career in a small traditional private school. As all new teachers, I was highly motivated and enthusiastic about my first teaching position. However, one week before the beginning of school, I learned I was to have a deaf child in my class. I was apprehensive and taken back by this fact. I was concerned whether or not my teaching skills would be sufficient to educate a deaf child. I worried about the reaction of the hearing students, to one non-hearing student. I wondered how we would all communicate? At this time, I had never heard the term "mainstreaming" and knew little of what it entailed.

What could I do? I accepted the challenge with no prior knowledge of educating the hearing impaired. I was assured of the full support of the administration by the principal.

It was a small school with only one class per grade. Therefore, the children had all been together since the first grade. My first undertaking was to sensitize the children to Andrew's handicap. I explained Andrew's situation and enlisted their help. I did this by first relating my few personal experiences with the hearing impaired. I tried to impress my pupils with the fact that deaf people must "see" and "feel" what we are able to hear.

Since I wanted the students to feel what it was like to be deaf, I showed them a film without the sound. Then I instructed them to write a brief summary of the movie. There were thirty-five children in the class and we had at least fifteen different interpretations. I then allowed them to view the film again but this time with the sound. The children were amazed. They now understood how confusing it can be when you must rely only on your eyes for information.

We also discussed other problems of being deaf. e.g., If you were deaf, how would you:

—get up in the morning if you cannot hear an alarm clock?
—know when there was a fire drill in school?
- be able to talk on the telephone?
—watch television?
—what other senses could you use to understand what's going on?

The class reaction was excellent. The children decided on many ways of how they could help Andrew. I was very pleased because I felt one of the most important factors was for the class to accept Andrew.

A week later the principal brought Andrew into my fifth grade class. Andrew was a well-built boy with brown hair and brown eyes. The principal introduced us and assigned John, a very competent student, to help Andrew out—a sort of buddy system—until he settled into school. Andrew appeared shy and withdrawn at first. As he became better acclimated to the school, he came out of his shell.

Andrew had always been in a school for the deaf. His former school had taught total communication—(both sign and oral methods). However, Andrew's parents signed, thus sign language was the basic form of communication for Andrew. Here was my first major problem—communication! Andrew knew what I said most of the time because he could read lips very well, but I had no idea what he was saying. After two weeks of trying to communicate with Andrew, I decided to learn sign language.

I enrolled in a sign language class. Andrew and I then took up the task of teaching the class the sign alphabet. It worked out very well—Andrew had something to offer and it made communication much easier. I made the sign alphabet a part of the spelling program. We spelled the words in the sign language alphabet and played numerous spelling games. We also tried to learn one or two basic sign words every day. The children in the class became quite good at signing, and enjoyed what they were learning.

Andrew was bright and really had the desire to succeed in school. Academically, mathematics was Andrew's strong point as it required little or no reading. Social studies, science, and reading were the most difficult for Andrew. He was below level in reading and lacked a good vocabulary. He also experienced difficulty with words that had more than one meaning. Many simple concepts especially in social studies and science needed an added explanation. His vocabulary was just so limited it did not lend itself to

the social studies and science terminologies. Many terms had to be rephrased as Andrew did not understand them in their original form.

I tried to use as many visual aids as possible—charts, diagrams, overheads, captioned films, etc.—to enhance his understanding of the lessons. I also tried to have the itinerant teacher introduce the vocabulary of a lesson prior to the lesson. This enabled Andrew to increase his vocabulary and have a better grasp of the concepts in social studies and science.

When Andrew first entered our school, he did not ask for help. He was able to look at you in a way that said "Yes, I understand." When questioned further it became evident that he did not comprehend the concept. As time went on, he soon realized it was more beneficial to ask for assistance. In this way, he became more confident and sure of himself and was able to participate more in all of his classes.

There was a good parental support. Andy's parents had wanted the move to a regular classroom setting for many reasons. Especially, since they wanted Andrew to be able to function in a normal setting. His parents worked hard with him at home to keep his lessons current. He was always well prepared for class. They spent several hours per night working with him. They also hired a speech therapist and a tutor. Andrew's parents were always readily available for consultation. They realized that the transition would be a difficult one for Andrew as well as for the school.

The principal's support was evident. She made it clear to Andrew that he was expected to keep abreast of all assignments and inappropriate behavior was not acceptable. She also investigated the possibilities of obtaining an itinerant teacher for Andrew from the local school district. We finally did receive an itinerant teacher to work with Andy several hours per week. I met with the itinerant teacher on a regular basis to go over key ideas of major lessons and to keep her updated on Andrew's progress.

The itinerant teacher was helpful, but there was one problem. While Andy was working with her, he was missing regular classroom lessons and would therefore fall behind. It became apparent that these lessons had to be covered by the itinerant teacher or made up at home with a tutor his parent had hired. Andrew spent a tremendous amount of time at home on his school work in order to keep up with the other students.

We had received bad reports from Andrew's previous school concerning his behavior. In the classroom, I saw an extremely well behaved and considerate child who respected the other members of the class. I know Andrew must have experienced a great deal of frustration in the classroom. There were so many things he did not understand and he would ask for the concept to be explained again. Several times we could not understand him, and he would have to repeat his questions. If that didn't work, he would sign. If there was still no success, he might actually have to write his thoughts down. He was able to consistently deal with his frustration in an appropriate manner. Outside the classroom, I can only recall one incident where Andy exhibited aggressive behavior. The principal handled the matter and Andrew readily learned more appropriate ways of handling his frustrations.

I cannot be sure whether or not Andrew fully accepted the fact that he was deaf. He knew it made him different and that he had to compensate for this difference. He told me that one of the problems of being deaf that bothered him most was his inability to talk on the telephone. I can recall Andy telling me that he just wanted to be like everyone else. He wanted to know why he was deaf? Was it fair that he could not hear while everyone else could? These are hard questions for a child to cope with and understand.

The class as a whole accepted Andy well. They were willing to take the time to assist him in any way they could. In class, if I was unable to get a concept across, one of the other students would be able to assist him. Outside of class they tended to "protect" him and made the rest of the school aware of his handicap. The class had a great deal of empathy for Andy's handicap. I knew that socially, outside of school, they had also accepted him. He had finally made the "hearing friends" that he had always wanted.

It is by no means an easy undertaking having a handicapped child in your class. I feel that I should have been better prepared on different techniques for teaching deaf children. So much of that first year was trial and error. I feel regular classroom teachers need to be further prepared for the education of handicapped children. Teachers need to know specifics—"How do I teach a deaf child to read? What are the best techniques for preparing the normal students? How should I deal with the emotional problems and frustrations of a deaf child?" These are only a few of the concerns a teacher must face when educating a handicapped student. I was apprehensive knowing that Andrew was to be in my class. Perhaps, I would not have had fears about his placement in my class if I had been better prepared.

Andrew did succeed in making a good transition into our school. However, I feel his success was dependent upon his great desire to succeed, my supportive attitude, class acceptance, and parental and administrational support of the endeavor.

Mainstreaming is with us to stay. It is a reality. Handicapped children have been segregated from the regular school systems much too long. These children must feel a part of our society if they are to function in society. Handicapped children need to know how to communicate, work, and socialize with all children.

Non-handicapped children need mainstreaming too. They must learn to accept all people for what they are and to respect their differences. Children learn best through experience. They must have first-hand knowledge and understanding of the handicapped in order to understand and to accept them.

Meeting the Challenge of PL 94-142: A View From a Dean's Grant

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Bringing about change in major societal institutions is a long and difficult process. Education today is involved in just such a change process particularly as it relates to the education of handicapped students. Sudden shifts in societal priorities are not implemented easily. When PL 94-142 (1977), The Education of All Handicapped Children Act (1975), became effective in 1977, only a relatively small percentage of schools were prepared for full compliance.

Two major obstacles to implementation were: 1) the level of preparation among school personnel relevant to their changing roles and responsibilities; and 2) a general misunderstanding of the intent of the law. The most prevalent idea being that PL 94-142 meant the wholesale "dumping" of handicapped children back into regular classrooms without adequate support from special educators and other school based personnel. In effect, the law requires the placement of handicapped children according to the principle of the *least restrictive alternative* and that "to the maximum extent appropriate" handicapped children will be educated with their non-handicapped peers.

Special education services are being decentralized so that services can be provided in many places rather than restricted to just a few places (Reynolds and Birch, 1978). Special educators, school psychologists, and other school-based specialists must learn how to work closely with teachers as well as with children. A climate must be established within schools that allows for the establishment of consultative relationships between classroom teachers and special educators.

Many handicapped students designated as emotionally handicapped or learning disabled have been returned to regular public schools from special education placements with a minimum of preparation for regular school staff. A large number of children receive special education services for a small part of each day and are placed in regular classrooms for most of the day. Without the adequate preparation of both teachers and peers these students can experience humiliation and failure and the regular class teacher can be subjected to frustration because of a lack of success in meeting their needs as well as the needs of all of the other students. Too often, the regular class teacher has not had the training to simultaneously meet the needs of the special student and also educate regular students.

Only a real commitment to appropriately educate handicapped students in the mainstream can ensure a solution to the problem. We must retool regular classroom teachers and other school staff for the challenge of mainstreaming. Most school personnel are unprepared to teach or understand the needs of many handicapped students. In all school districts, educational specialists are needed to work directly with classroom teachers and school administrators in meeting the educational needs of special children.

While the immediate responsibility for implementing the mandate of PL 94-142 was placed on the local school districts and their personnel, the responsibility also extends to those institutions of higher education that prepare personnel for the schools. The needed changes are also occurring at institutions of higher education due in large measure to the funding of Dean's Grants (Grosenick and Reynolds, 1978) by the Bureau for Education of the Handicapped of the Office of Education. Since 1975, these planning grants have been awarded to approximately 140 colleges and universities in order to support faculty involved in the training of school personnel in the redesign of their preparation programs in accord with the principles of PL 94-142.

In June, 1980, the School of Education of C.W. Post Center, a campus of Long Island University, was awarded a Dean's Grant and our attempts to bring about change within an educational institution undoubtedly reflects the difficulties, concerns, and realities that are faced by the educational community as a whole in trying to implement the intent of PL 94-142.

The obstacles inherent in institutionalizing change have been reported by McLaughlin and Marsh (1978) who documented this process in the public schools, and by Hall (1978) and Arends and Arends (1978) who addressed the major issues involved in the process of change at the college level. There appears to be areas of concern that are shared by both the public schools and institutions of higher educa-

tion. The major factors which can contribute to the success of institutional change efforts can be grouped into four areas: 1(perceptions; 2) staff development; 3) compensation; and 4) open communication.

Perceptions

Positive and negative perceptions of mainstreaming are identifiable throughout the educational hierarchy beginning with the non-handicapped students in regular classrooms in which mainstreaming occurs, to the administrators, the teachers, the parents, and to faculty in higher education. At C.W. Post, faculty attitudes and feelings about PL 94-142 (1977) cover a wide range. There are faculty who support concepts, faculty who favor the humanistic values inherent in the concept but who do not have time to get involved, faculty who resent the effort, who feel it is an attempt by special education to extend their power, and those faculty who, for whatever reason, are hostile and resistant.

We have some cautious people who are sincerely interested, but who are questioning if this may not be just another "innovation". It seems that they would like to get involved, but have experienced disappointment in the past when they gave of themselves to promote an innovative change only to see it die. And of course, we do have the "doubters" who are committed to a "wait and see" attitude and are sure that our efforts will eventually dissolve and disappear.

Because faculty display such a diversity of attitudes toward mainstreaming, it is important that those who are responsible for bringing about change be aware of these attitudes and design intervention strategies that take these factors into account. At C.W. Post, for example, project staff had to resolve the question of whether to spend a major portion of planning time in converting the disaffected faculty—or to capitalize on the attitudes of positive faculty.

Staff Development

Broad-based faculty input is essential if changes are to be institutionalized. A number of representative faculty members must be significantly involved in the planning, implementing and evaluating of the entire change process. At C.W. Post, faculty input has been obtained from a planning committee made up of faculty members with different backgrounds and different areas of specialization. However, all of the members of the group were open to the idea of change and could help to facilitate change. They all viewed the need to promote program redevelopment as important enough to give of their time and energy and this communicated and promoted a sense of faculty ownership and opened the way to making program revisions possible.

Also, when planning faculty development actiivites (e.g., workshops, conferences, seminars, etc.), diversity is an important factor that must be taken into account. One of our regular education faculty was quick to point out that "faculty, like students, have different learning needs and different learning styles". Therefore it is important to keep in mind that faculty is always made up of individuals with different needs and diverse activities are necessary in order to appeal to each member of the faculty.

It is equally important to note that when the ultimate outcome is curriculum revision, we cannot escape the fact that some faculty are going to need to restructure their course content and incorporate new concepts and new skills. While their initial reaction toward the needed changes may have been a positive one, they may be uncomfortable regarding the acquisition of new information and new skills and these factors need to be considered. Here again, it is important to develop a number of different faculty development activities which will assist them in acquiring new information and break out of established patterns in order to better service the larger educational community.

Finally, in any attempt to impart new knowledge or new skills it is vital that faculty understand that the needed innovations are a "shared" concern. Mainstreaming must come to be perceived as a mutual problem and not simply the domain of regular education, or special education, or counselor education, or educational administration, etc. It is a concern that has to be addressed by everyone because it impacts on all areas of education. We have to recognize that no one area of education can offer any meaningful solutions to the problem by themselves and that a meaningful resolution can only come about if everyone works together.

Compensation

The traditional reward structure in education generally is not responsive to participation in internal change efforts. Therefore, the involvement of key administrators (e.g., deans, district and building line adminstrators, etc.) is a crucial factor in the success of a change project.

Central office admininstrators as well as school board members must accept the policies and practices of PL 94-142 and make a real commitment to full implementation. Without such a commitment, school principals, teachers and other school staff cannot be expected to take any proposed changes seriously. Probably, the most pivotal factor will be the commitment of the school principal to the needed changes. Unless teachers perceive administrators' attitudes as receptive and positive to the need for restructuring the educational delivery system in their schools, they will not endorse and will resist change efforts. Similarly, regular teachers cannot be expected to fully endorse the mainstreaming concept until they see special education and support personnel moving to adopt new roles and responsibilities and tangible evidence of real support moving into their classrooms.

One of the ways that the Dean of C.W. Post's School of Education provided support for the project was through public statements that the needed changes are transdisciplinary, that they have implications for all students and for education in general not just for handicapped learners or for special programs. Ultimately, however, staff's program development efforts must be rewarded by pride in achievement of new goals and by better service to students. Addi-

tionally, at the college level an improved program will attract more and better students to the college which will in turn give visibility to its developers.

Open Communication

Finally, attention must be given to the area of communication. Interdepartmental communication is essential to the success of mainstreaming efforts. However, such communication and collaboration is frequently absent particularly in regard to the sharing of professional concerns. One of the most interesting results of our Dean's grant efforts to date has been the many comments from faculty, when given the opportunity to interact, regarding the positive benefits from such dialogues and the realization that there are common interests and efforts.

One faculty member encapsulated this feeling saying, "It (the interaction) has reinforced my belief that there is a false separation between special education and regular education and that in teacher education we have to move to recognize and provide for the range of variability and uniqueness of individuals". Another faculty member expressed similar feelings in regard to teacher competencies remarking, "I can begin to see that the teacher capabilities that appear to be important for teaching students with special needs are not that different from the competencies that are needed by any *good* teacher".

At the college level, equally as important as interdisciplinary interactions is the involvement of field personnel in decision making in regard to program redevelopment. As project staff became involved in the whole process of change at C.W. Post, it became clear that it was necessary to reexamine the interface among the different components of teacher education. That is, how schools and colleges were interrelating as part of a total system. What we realized was that schools, their communities, and colleges were often unnecessarily disconnected from one another and that the entire system had to be reconceptualized and redesigned in order to ensure better linkages among all levels of education.

We recognized, very early, that we had to move to restructure our present approach with one that provided closer collaboration and communication between all levels of the educational spectrum. Because we realized that the college needed to be increasingly aware of what the schools required, we decided to invest a good part of our financial and personal resources toward strategies that would effectively link those schools that were seeking change with the changes that were taking place within the school of education.

Therefore, field personnel, including teachers, administrators, counselors, students and parents, have been called upon to assist project staff in a number of ways. They have assisted in the identification of critical issues, in the development of competency statements, and ultimately they will assist in a total collaborative effort to redesign and implement inservice and preservice training for mainstreaming.

A specific long range goal of the project is to develop in collaboration with local school districts model practicum sites for student teachers in both regular and special education. Only through a collaborative effort of this kind can significant information be ascertained about the responsibilities and concerns of school personnel in regard to the education of the handicapped in a regular school setting. And these are the critical factors that need to be identified by those who are planning changes in teacher education programs.

Probably one of the most important results of our Dean's Grant will be the opportunities it will provide for such interactions. Perhaps, all of us, in the different areas of education need to find out, in the same way as children do as a result of their interactions, that our concerns and efforts are more similar than dissimilar. That we are all educators first, regardless of our roles, responsibilities, or areas of specialization, and by establishing more integral working relationships, we can forge a unified effort that will result in better education for all children.

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PROFESSIONAL NEWS

Dr. Herman R. Goldberg has been appointed Acting Assistant Secretary of Special Education by Secretary Bell. Dr. Goldberg succeeds Dr. Edwin W. Martin, who has been reassigned to another position within the Department of Education. Dr. Goldberg is an experienced special educator, was one of the founding fathers of our State CEC, and was a State CEC President.

Dr. Albert Budnick is now the Chairman, Department of Special Education and Reading, School of Education, C.W. Post Center of Long Island University, Greenvale, New York.

State CEC is compiling a *Speaker and Consultants* list. Those interested please send your name, address, telephone numbers, and areas of expertise to David Lazerson, Assistant Editor-Intern.

Western New York Chapter 402 is sponsoring a full day workshop by **Dr. Sidney B. Simon.** His topic will be Burnout, Stress, and Values Clarification. The workshop will be held on March 19, 1981, at D'youville College, Buffalo, New York. Call Kathleen Calabrese or Alice Kozen (716) 886-8100, ext. 261, 381.

Mainstreaming: A Teacher's Perspective (What's Going on Here?)

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Teacher: I had an incident today with one of the students in my 6th period shop class and I would like to talk to you about it. He used the electric drill to carve his initials on the desk of the student next to him.

Supervisor: What did you do about it?

Teacher: After refusing my request to put the drill down, I told him to put it down. His response was to point the drill in my direction. To be honest, I really wasn't sure how to handle this situation. I don't want to come down hard on this kid since it's the beginning of the term. But I want to be sure that no one in my shop gets hurt, including me!

Supervisor: Has this student been a problem before?

Teacher: No. In fact, Phil has been one of the more quiet students in the class.

Supervisor: So, what did you do?

Teacher: I motioned to one of the students to turn off the main power switch. When all the machines in the room stopped, every one looked at us to see what was happening. The next thing I knew Phil threw the drill on the floor and ran from the room shouting "I hate all of you!"

Supervisor: Oh, I wonder if he's from special ed. . .? Let me check my files. Here it is, yes, he's in the emotionally handicapped class, and there's an IEP in his folder."

Teacher: Emotionally handicapped? No one told me. What am I supposed to do?

Supervisor: I'm not sure, talk to the special ed. teacher.

Teacher: Who is the special education teacher?

Supervisor: I'm not sure. Why don't you stop into the office and check.

Narrator: By the time the shop teacher located the room of the special education teacher, she had left for the day. It took two more days for these two teachers to adjust their schedules to have a meeting. You can well understand the shop teacher's need to have this meeting before Phil returned to his class.

From the time of the indicent to the time of the meeting, the shop teacher tried to analyze his situation by formulating the following questions:

1) Why wasn't I told that I had a special education student in my class?
2) How am I supposed to respond to this student's needs?
3) How many other special education students are in my classes?
4) How is it decided that these students are going to be in my classes?
5) Was it my fault that this incident occured?

The shop teacher's concerns typify a situation in which many classroom teachers find themselves. The situation is characterized by a lack of information sharing about students needs which results in feelings of insecurity, resentment and confusion by the receiving teacher.

We return now to the scheduled meeting which is taking place at 7:00 A.M. in the special education classroom. The success of this meeting is dependent upong the openness, sensitivity and cooperation that these teachers are able to share as they attempt to clarify this situation.

Special Ed. Teacher: You told me there was a disturbance in your shop class. What happened?

Narrator: The shop teacher recounts the incident. While doing so he exhibits anger about the situation. What the special education teacher begins to realize is that the shop teacher was never informed that this student is being mainstreamed into his class.

Shop Teacher: . . .so how can I be expected to run my shop classes, where there are many dangerous pieces of equipment, when I have students who are emotionally handicapped and nobody tells me?

Special Ed. Teacher: I didn't realize that you were not informed that Phil is in a special education program. I assumed the evaluators who made the decision to main-

stream Phil into a shop class would also inform you, too. Didn't anyone tell you?

Shop Teacher: No! And I don't think I can handle his outbursts. I don't know what to do.

Special Ed. Teacher: Would you be willing to work out a plan of action?

Shop Teacher: What plan?

Special Ed. Teacher: What do you think of the following: I'll share with you some strategies that have worked with Phil. I will meet with Phil to discuss the incident, and I will arrange a meeting, at your convenience, between you, me and Phil.

Shop Teacher: That sounds good. We must have that meeting before his next shop class.

Special Ed. Teacher: Agreed. Now, let me tell you what we have done to help him. . .

Narrator: It is now 7:30 A.M. and the first period bell rings. The shop teacher must get to class. The special education teacher (being on a different time schedule) is able to walk with the shop teacher and discuss the following. . .

Special Ed. Teacher: Whenever Phil is distracted from the class lesson, I try to bring him back to the task through an indirect approach. When I use this approach, I try to do it with light humor and physical distance. For example, during an English literature lesson the group assignment was to write a reaction to the discussion we just finished. I noticed that Phil was drawing when he was supposed to be writing. So, I offered the following suggestion, "Class, we need some volunteers to illustrate the discussion we just had. Phil, as soon as you finish the assignment you can organize the illustrations." Phil looked up with pride and agreed.

Shop Teacher: You mean, if I had suggested an alternative this incident might have been avoided?

Special Ed. Teacher: I think so.

Shop Teacher: Thanks for the suggestion. Let's meet with Phil as soon as possible.

The story you've just read is based on fact. It illustrates the response that many school districts, statewide, have to the implementation of the "least restrictive environment" section of PL. 94-142. They are focusing on the letter of the law without concern for the spirit of the law. Many school districts pride themselves on the number of students being mainstreamed. They see this superficial compliance with the law as the extent of their responsibility to provide the least restrictive educational environment for exceptional students. Districts are supported in these actions, since procedural safeguards are mandated for parents and pupils while teachers' professional development and time allocations for teacher to teacher consultations are only suggested. The current implementation of the "least restrictive environment" mandate of PL. 94-142 often ignores the needs of *all* the parties involved in this process.

When the priority consideration (in the placement of exceptional students) is financial, other abuses tend to occur. In some schools whole special education classes are grouped with regular classes for subjects such as gym, art and science. This enables the school and district to save the cost of hiring a teacher to provide appropriate educational experiences for these classes. This type of wholesale mainstreaming angers special education teachers. "My students' needs can't be met in a gym class with forty or more students. Their need for individualized and small group movement and coordination is totally ignored."

In some schools students are mainstreamed without regard to any criteria. "If it doesn't work, we move the kid to another class." What this form of wholesale mainstreaming creates is the time to use special education teachers to cover regular education classes.

The reality is that many schools and districts deny teachers the chance to use their abilities in the planning of mainstreaming as it effects teachers and students. There is little or no consideration for teachers' needs to grow into this expanded role and responsibility assigned them through PL 94-142. This benign neglect on the part of educational planners influences the professional attitudes and subsequent behaviors of teachers. This influence is negative and increases teachers feelings that the educational bureaucracy disregards them. The message is, "a good teacher follows directives and doesn't ask questions."

The school tells an educator to function in a new role without additional training and support. When the teachers exhibit distress, confusion and anger at the inappropriateness of this situation, they are often told that they don't care about the educational needs and rights of exceptional students. It is more probable that the teacher's concern reflects high regard for the concept that all students have the right to an *appropriate* education in the "least restrictive environment." As one New York City teacher stated, ". . .I think handicapped students should be mainstreamed. It's just that I wouldn't know where to begin. I'm really afraid of doing more harm than good." A colleague added, ". . .I'm always reading about the new federal laws and funding for handicapped students. Besides the fact that I don't really

know what they're all about, what will they do to help me learn how to mainstream and teach handicapped kids? Frankly, it sounds like the right thing to do but I'm scared of it." "If we allow the dumping of handicapped pupils, their experience in the mainstream class will be failure, my experience as a classroom teacher will be frustration and the regular student's attitude toward the exceptional student will be negative."

In those districts and schools which have developed a comprehensive plan that includes direct services to children, teachers, parents and administrators the concept of "least restrictive environment" is recognized as an opportunity for growth. In each case, the priorities of preparation, planning and training for all personnel involved results in a positive professional experience. As one regular classroom teacher put it, "When I first heard about mainstreaming I was totally opposed to it. The training opportunities provided by my district have enabled me to upgrade my skills and develop new teaching strategies which are of benefit to all the students in my class."

Systemwide, school-based and teacher-perceived issues and problems demonstrate the overwhelming need to improve policies and procedures which impact upon the effective and appropriate mainstreaming of exceptional children. If these students are to receive a free, appropriate education in the least restrictive environment change must begin with that teacher who is professionally responsible for that least restrictive environment from 8:40 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.—the classroom teacher.

Teachers recognize that legislators have mandated what we are to implement. The challenge for us lies in determining how it is to be done. If teachers receive the necessary support and training we can provide opportunities which enable exceptional students to be appropriately mainstreamed in the regular classroom. The presence of these students surfaces a need that goes beyond "mainstreamed". We understand this need to be the development of an educational environment in which the exceptional student becomes an integrated functioning member of the class.

When teachers throughout New York City filled out needs assessments distributed in 1978, one of the leading concerns they expressed was how to handle the fact that they might soon find mainstreamed children in their classes. In July of 1979 the United Federation of Teachers was awarded grants, on behalf of the New York City Teacher Center consortium, from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the New York State Education Department to establish the Mainstreaming Training Project for Teachers. The goal of the Project is to deliver supportive services and training which respond to this expanded role for classroom teachers. It is a teacher governed program for professional growth which offers opportunities for teachers to learn from each other in a non-judgmental environment relying on peer support and exchange. Professional support services are designed to:

(1) Develop an atmosphere of acceptance by helping the school and community understand the needs of mainstreamed students.
(2) Provide consultation, demonstration and assistance to teachers who wish to explore and expand teaching techniques in both individual and group settings.
(3) Share ideas, build skills, develop strategies, modify curriculum and foster professional development.
(4) Provide parents with information concerning special needs of students through consultation and workshops.
(5) Promote teaching methods that are practical and successful.

The Project is in schools located in seven New York City School districts. It is based on the Teacher Center concept of non-supervisory, voluntary participation. The Project has two impact levels coordinated by full time teacher specialists. The first is the on-site, in-school component through which all members of the school and community have the opportunity to consult with the teacher specialist concerning the education of exceptional children in the "least restrictive environment." Project personnel have had the greatest opportunity to identify issues and provide strategies and resources which address the real rather than perceived needs of classroom teachers. As one teacher specialist remarked, "I've found that teachers are eager for very specific information about the actual disabilities. Once they know what they can expect from a child, the teachers start to see past the handicapping condition and see that child as an individual." The on-site, in-school component responds to the recognition that behaviorial change is the result of congruency between a person's intellect and feelings. Teachers choosing to participate in the Mainstreaming Training Project have the opportunity to increase their information base while continuing on-going consultation with the teacher specialist. This combination of information and support in conjunction with active teacher participation leads to positive attitude changes. The result is professional growth on the part of teachers and increased opportunities for student learning. "I used to resent the whole idea of mainstreaming. I felt that the handicapped students needs were more than I could handle. I was never trained to teach special education. The teacher specialist has helped me to grow professionally and personally." Another teacher comments, "I now focus on the mainstreamed student's abilities rather than his disabilities."

The second level of impact is the After School Component. This includes both in-service and graduate credit courses which are offered at the Project schools. This component provides project personnel with the opportunity to respond to the needs of teachers city-wide. As a result of the after-school courses, teachers have visited the project schools, to consult with teacher specialists. All courses are designed and

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Deep in the Maddening Mainstream*

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For all children, regardless of handicapping condition, a free, appropriate education in "the least restrictive environment"—that was the dream to be fulfilled by order of the Congress of the United States. As THE law was translated from lawmakers to bureaucrats and educational philosophers, and then to school administrators, the word "mainstreaming" became intertwined with the interpretation of the law. The pundits "talked" and then the teachers had to "do," or "make do" as the case may be. As I spoke with teachers, regular and special education, in city, suburban and rural school districts, a commonality of experiences and frustrations emerged. Each one could almost speak for us all.

A nine-year old boy with *spina bifida* who had never been to any school and was placed without consultation with the teacher, in a regular first grade classroom. One can almost hear the adminstrative rationale for the placement. The teacher is competent and caring, one who has developed a program that provides for a strong developmental skills program combined with an opportunity for a variety of learning experiences. There is an excellent management system. Children work and play, learn to relate and share and grow in independence—open education at its very best. This nine year old needed socialization with his peers but had the readiness level of a three year old. A special services teacher came on a limited basis, but she would only work with him alone. This only emphasized his separateness. There was no time for the two teachers to interact. In the words of the regular teacher, it was a "sheer disaster." The family moved in less than six months—"real estate therapy."

In an economy move, a paraplegic child was removed from a residential school and placed in a regular school. An aide was provided, but neither the teacher nor the aide are trained to provide the adaptive skills this child needs.

Teachers of special children sometimes find themselves also out of the mainstream. In one case, the teacher was warmly welcomed by the staff. However, her efforts to integrate her children, young and developmentally delayed, were subtly resisted. She was told that parents whose children needed transition classes would reject those placements if they sensed any commonality of program—even something as innocuous as sharing class trips. Quietly, this very special teacher persisted. Her children, very well trained, now have peer tutors, lunch room friends, and participate in the activities of many regular classes. This teacher maintains control of evaluation so that a common concern of many regular teachers—grading—does not obtain here.

A deaf child was placed in a regular program. The school's way of accommodating her needs was to have her repeat first grade. An itinerant teacher of the deaf was provided one period daily. The regular teacher, angry at what she considered an imposition on an already overburdened program, refused any accommodation to this child's handicap. If she could function in the group, "fine." If not, "too bad"—there were twenty-five other children who were entitled to an education too.

One young teacher of emotionally and learning handicapped children in a middle school was so angry and frustrated by the inadequacies of the program that she was ready to leave teaching. For example, last year, because of poor scheduling and teacher rejection, three of her children had to sit in the office for a period daily so she could have a lunch period.

This year, with another class in the building, the two teachers can support each other and are attempting some modifications. For those children ready to deal with more than one teacher, they are departmentalizing between themselves. They see this as a transitional stage so that children can learn to handle more than one teaching style and shifting student dynamics. Learning to move through the halls during period changes is also very important.

These teachers feel that many regular teachers are too bound to course content to understand that the goals of mainstreaming are different for different children. Grading is a real problem. These two teachers have developed a one-page check list to be distributed twice each quarter. Many teachers objected to the "extra work." Some noted "satisfactory" in all areas and failed the student anyway.

Scheduling is done very poorly. Instead of arranging programs during the summer as is done for regular students, these children get program changes during the first few weeks so that they are immediately different when they walk into a regular class.

When there has been a match, child with specific teacher, and there has been advance preparation, there has been better success. One fifth grade girl was brought back from a special services school. She and her parents visited the school last spring. Having good reading skills, she was placed in a strong average class in the regular departmentalized reading program. Here again, the regular teacher was well prepared.

When it became apparent that she was often alone at lunch, her teacher spoke with a regular fifth grade teacher and by that afternoon, the latter had enlisted the help of four girls and arranged for walking together to lunch. The friendship is even beginning to extend outside the lunchroom. The regular teacher continues to subtly guide that relationship. (It should be noted that this same teacher is highly supportive of all children.) The special education teacher sees the next step as participation in the Social program of that class.

These teachers are hoping to be allowed faculty meeting time to begin sensitizing the staff to the needs of children with handicapping conditions and bring about some changes in attitude. They chuckled with delight recounting the story of being beset by an angry teacher complaining about a child's behavior, and the look on his face when he realized that *that* child was not theirs—and that *their* child was "passing."

The problems of the Resource Room are similar in many ways. There are, however, some unique differences. To begin with, the handicapping conditions are not so severe. The children have somewhat better skills and are more easily integrated. In fact, they *are* assigned to a regular teacher and leave the regular program only for one or two periods daily. The regular teacher is frequently asked to modify some of the existing program. Many are highly supportive. Many others, however, run the gamut from benign neglect to outright hostility. A frequent demand is "Take him out, he can't do the work!" and when he is out "He's missing classwork." And then, the child who has trouble doing the basic work to begin with is required to make up what he has missed in class by doing the work at home! Instead of modifying the curriculum to expect less, this child has *more* work than other children. He goes home, attempts to do it, his parents get involved, and the whole evening at home becomes a time of frustration. Or else, he doesn't do the work, "loses" the book, etc. The teacher sends a note home and the family tensions become even greater.

Over and over again, Resource Room teachers expressed concerns that regular teachers can't accept the reality of a learning problem. These children are still being viewed as "lazy," immature, or "rebelling against home situations by refusing to work." Furthermore, many special ed teachers note that regular teachers talk about suggestions for coping but resort to old methodologies in practice. One regular teacher had a sign on her door that read, "In this room, we make mistakes." Actually, in that room, no one dared!

Another thorny problem is level placement. A persistent strategy for handling children who are disorganized and don't work up to expectations, is to place that child on a lower level. Moving a child down for not working rarely accomplishes its intended purpose. Instead, negative self-concepts are once more reinforced and acting out or greater withdrawal behaviors manifest themselves.

The children in the Resource Room are subjected to an inordinate amount of testing. Correct or not, school districts are interpreting state mandates that annual school achievement tests (even though criterion-reference data can be drawn from them) are not enough. Therefore, in addition to that week of testing, these children have a week of criterion-reference testing in the fall and spring. If the children are in third or sixth grade, there is another week of PEP tests. And, if it should be decided that the child also needs additional reading or math help, there are another set of tests fall and srping. The only ones who benefit from this test-mania are the publishers who sell the tests and the bureaucrats whose jobs depend on writing up all that nonsense. The kids? Weeks of lost instructional time.

The regular classroom teachers fell under pressure to cover curriculum and maintain the integrity of a grading system. They feel that a passing grade that is not based on a certain level of mastery in misleading. An eight grade Social Studies teacher resents the fact that an unrealistic picture has been given to a deaf girl in one of his classes. "She is just vegetating." If this student remains in his class, he will insist that the itinerant teacher not be doing the grading. He is angry at this illusion of an education and feels that instead, this student should be in a total program that could enable her to develop the skills she will need as an adult.

This teacher does not reject children with handicapping conditions. In fact, he has actively supported the children in the Resource Room program since its inception. He and other members of his department are continuously seeking out and implementing individual coping strategies and realistic demands for individual children.

It was a treat to listen to one English teacher as she described her success with one very bright but disorganized student in an honor class. She's had plenty of frustration and given him a great deal of attention but her pride and satisfaction was very evident as she shared some of his work—quite a contrast to her colleagues of the "get him out" or "move her down" school where he would have just sat.

What ideas can we draw from these representative experiences to make for more effective education for our children? To begin with, we must recognize that we need to be adept not only at the direct delivery of services but at communication skills as well.

There need to be ongoing programs to sensitize children, parents, teachers and administrators to the needs of people with all kinds of handicapping conditions. With children, these programs should be in small groups using strategies of values clarification and simulation games. Hopefully, the teachers will gain insight as well.

We must remain sensitive to the needs of the regular program. Teachers have a commitment to educate all their children. They also live with the spectre of accountability.

Teacher training programs must be modified to

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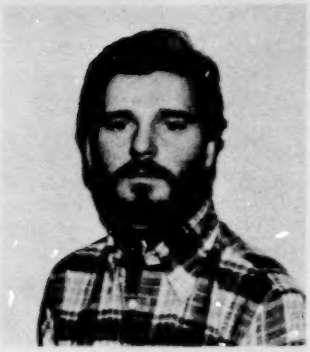

"Communicating Effectively with Regular Educators"

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The role of the special educator is changing as are the competencies necessary for success in this role. The separatist notion of regular education versus special education is no longer viable nor is it acceptable. Special educators are rapidly discovering that providing direct services to children is not enough if we are to make mainstreaming a success. Rather, one must be able to transmit educationally relevant information regarding disabled children/adolescents to regular educators.

While there are many variables that can contribute to the success or failure of mainstreaming, the purpose of this article is to focus on the crucial variable of communication between the special education resource room teacher and the receiving regular classroom teacher. Based on my discussions with scores of regular educators, I have come to the realization that they have specific needs that are not being met by the special education personnel in their school district. To be sure, this is not to blame special educators for the failure of mainstreaming efforts. After all, they have been reinforced throughout their pre-service training years that their major purpose was to provide direct services to children. What alarmed me was that excellent special education teachers (as judged by their supervisors and previous university instructors) felt a need to develop competencies in the area of communication with regular educators. These teachers realized the need to establish better relationships with their regular education colleagues, but did not know how to go about it. What follows is a discussion of my experiences with regular education teachers in which they expressed their perceptions of the role of special educators and recommendations for special educators.

What Do Regular Education Teachers Want?

Teachers "receiving" mainstreamed students into their classrooms have justifiable concerns. There are some who have had experiences with special children or who have taken courses dealing with special education, but in general, this is a relatively "new" undertaking for them. (The word new is in quotation marks because it is readily apparent to any observer in many regular classrooms that teachers who have no background or training in special education demonstrate an appreciation of individual differences that is reflected in their teaching. As one regular classroom teacher told me, "I've been doing this for years, I just never knew what it was called.") Unfortunately, their lack of information may lead to frustration which may take the form of hostility toward the special educator. After all, "they only have ten kids, and I (regular educator) have twenty-five!" This, coupled with declining enrollment (which leads to regular classroom teachers, with many years of experience—up to thirteen years in some school districts—being excessed) and increased services for disabled children/adolescents (which leads to the hiring of special educators with much less experience than their regular education counterparts), does not make for an environment conducive to cooperative planning.

For example, it is not unusual to go into schools in Nassau County, N.Y. (Long Island) where the average number of years teaching is fifteen to twenty for regular educators and two to three for special educators. This is usually accompanied by a wide gap in chronological age for these two groups. While I would like to believe that this, in and of itself, does not set up barriers to effective communication, I have heard regular classroom teachers say, in effect, "I've been teaching for twenty years, what are they (the special educator) going to tell me?"

The situation is not as bleak as it may appear, at least not yet. There seems to be a cadre of regular classroom teachers who have demonstrated a sincere interest in mainstreamed students by attending in-service courses, conferences, university courses, and the like. They are a small, but captive audience, whose needs must be met if mainstreaming is to succeed. If their needs are not met, there is little hope that we can bring about positive changes in attitudes and competencies in their less enthusiastic colleagues. My experiences indicate that they desire information regarding the following:

(1) The nature of the disorder of the mainstreamed youngster;
(2) Realistic goals for the youngsters while they are in the mainstreamed classroom;
(3) Methods and materials appropriate for the students;
(4) Ways to evaluate the student's progress in the mainstream;
(5) How to deal with parents of the mainstreamed students;
(6) Effective scheduling that does not interfere with normal classroom activities:

(7) The Individualized Education Program (I.E.P.) of the mainstreamed student;
(8) Role and responsibilities of the special educator.

Quite frankly, some of these points did not appear to be necessary, in my opinion. After discussions with regular classroom teachers, however, I can appreciate their need for this kind of information. Let me elaborate.

Nature of the Disorder

While there is research that speaks to the commonalities among certain disability groups (Hallahan and Kauffman, 1976), and we employ cliches such as, "teach the child, not the disability," there appears to be a need on the part of the regular classroom teacher to understand exactly what the student's problem is. This is especially true for the so-called invisible handicaps. Teachers have told me that if a child had a cast on the writing hand, they would never expect the student to copy from a board, but if they are told that a student has a visual-motor-integration problem (or worse—have no background information on the student), they find it difficult to comprehend why the student can't copy like everyone else if the student justs tries a little harder. This is not a suggest that special educators provide information equivalent to introductory courses in each area of exceptionality, but simply to attempt to provide information that may lead to an appreciation of the problems a student may encounter due to nature of the disability. This will also help to counter any incorrect information or perceptions the regular classroom teacher has about the disability.

For example, when I was teaching a group of learning disabled children in a resource room setting, a regular classroom teacher entered my room, and in a voice loud enough to be heard by all my students, said, "They're all retarded or disturbed, aren't they?" It was all of our good fortune that she was not a "receiving" mainstreamed teacher, but obviously if she was, a great deal of information would need to be disseminated to her regarding the nature and needs of the specific children in my class as well as other categories of disability so that her perceptions and prejudgements would not influence her expectations regarding these students.

Realistic Goals

I believe that most individuals want to succeed and teachers are no exception. The problem, however, is that success is not always clearly defined. One regular educator expressed this concern when she said, "they (special educators) are happy if he just stays in my room, but what am I supposed to do with him?" The goal may well be to have a student attend a regular classroom to increase his already adequate listening comprehension skills. The student may demonstrate mastery within the confines of the resource room, not the regular classroom. If the regular educator is unaware of this then difficulties ensue. The regular educator must know exactly why the child is being mainstreamed ("it's the law!" is clearly insufficient), what are the specific goals and how mastery is to be demonstrated. If they feel that the goals are not realistic within their setting, negotiations must be undertaken. Only through cooperative planning can regular and special educators come to a mutually agreed upon set of goals to be jointly implemented. Only through increased contact with their regular education colleagues, will special educators develop an awareness of what can realistically occur in mainstreamed settings.

Methods and Materials

It would be ill-advised to suggest that a teacher "read pages 97-123 in a particular special education textbook to find out how to deal with George." Regular educators need to know about specific materials, as well as methodology, that will increase the probability of success for a specific student. This applies for both academic and social behaviors. Special educators must actually demonstrate how the method and/or material is to be employed if the regular educator is to be successful. Special educators must also be sensitive to various teaching styles so that the methods and materials are not incompatible with a particular teacher's style. This may not always be possible, but it appears feasible to adapt materials and methods to meet teachers' needs in the same fashion that we do with students. If we are to appreciate individual differences in students, then we must realize that there are differences among teachers and develop a respect for their individuality.

Evaluation of Progress

As one who has a behavioristic orientation, I tend to think of evaluation as a dynamic, continuous process. However, I am not oblivious to the fact that approximately every ten weeks students receive report cards. The question often asked by the regular educator is "how am I going to grade them?" There are no easy answers to this query, but allow me to share some of my observations. When regular classroom teachers have to think hard about the evaluative criteria necessary for grading disabled students, they must think about it for all their students. So that this "coming to grips" with grading may have a beneficial effect for non-disabled students, as well as disabled students.

Some regular educators will let the resource room teacher give the grade, others will grade the student in consultation with the resource room teacher, and still others will grade the student without consulting the resource room teacher. The only hard and fast rule is that the procedures for grading be clearly spelled out prior to the student's placement in the mainstream. I can appreciate the frustration of the regular educator who must evaluate the performance of the mainstreamed child, but who does not know what criteria should be considered. Some school districts are well aware of the problems this presents and have established school wide committees, consisting of regular and special educators, and administrators, to iron out issues related to grading. Clearly, teachers involved in mainstreaming must know exactly what is expected of them in this regard.

Parents

Often times a parent of a disabled student will approach the mainstreamed teacher to inquire about their child's progress or to provide information. Many regular educators appear puzzled regarding their responsibility in this matter. Obviously, they *can* reply if they wish; however, what I often hear is "what do I tell the parent?" It seems to be sensible, since both the regular and special educator are working in a cooperative planning venture for the purpose of increasing the probability of the student's success in the mainstream, that they both meet with parents. This is not intended to limit the amount or kind of information given to parents—quite the contrary. It is merely to guard against the parent getting misinformation that typifies third party conversations. All would be better served if both the regular and special educator met with the parents simultaneously.

Scheduling

"Why do they have to take them out in the middle of my science lesson?" "I have enough interruptions already. I don't need another one." "If they have problems in reading, and not math, why do they take them out during my math periods?" Minor problems? Not really. It seems that these, and other scheduling difficulties, represent a major bone of contention for regular educators. While it is trite to suggest that the schedule be mutually agreed upon, that is precisely what must occur. If students are to get the most out of mainstreamed placements, then these scheduling problems must be addressed. It is helpful to get the building administrator involved in the scheduling process prior to the start of school, so that only minor modifications have to be made during the year.

I.E.P.

If the I.E.P. is to function as a blueprint for the education of the disabled student, there must be increased input for regular educators. The degree of information known regarding the I.E.P. appears to vary greatly. I have spoken with some mainstreamed teachers who didn't even know what it was, and to others who have had significant input in all phases of I.E.P. development and implementation. At very least, regular educators should be able to read the student's I.E.P., and in the best of all worlds, the regular educator should have input during all stages of the I.E.P.

For example, if the school district writes the I.E.P. in June, for the following year, a representative for the grade (elementary level) or department (secondary level) could be a part of the planning team so that in the following September they could be able to present this information to their regular education colleagues. Many districts are attempting to involve regular educators in the development stage of the I.E.P., not merely the implemental stage. This would also serve to increase the utility of the I.E.P. for all parties.

Role of Special Educator

Frequently, I have been surprised that regular educators were not aware what services were available from the resource room teacher. I have spoken with teachers who were not aware that their resource room teacher would tape record books or stories, that tests could be taken in the resource room, that the resource room teacher would be willing to help a student with an assignment. Quite clearly, oftentimes, regular educators don't know what we're (special educators) doing! We need to communicate in such a way that they know exactly what can and can't be done by resource room teachers. This helps to establish clear cut expectations and will probably add to your prestige when they realize just how overworked you are!

What's a Special Educator to Do?

The solution is not solely in the hands of the special education teacher, however, there are a few specific recommendations. First, develop an informal needs assessment for regular classroom teachers who have mainstreamed students. While the information presented above was gleaned from a large number of regular educators, the needs of teachers in your school may differ. A needs assessment enables you to provide information that they feel is important and thereby increases the probability that they will be receptive. Secondly, develop a booklet regarding the function of the resource room as well as specific services that you can provide. This will help to establish clear cut expectations on the part of the regular teachers and may enhance your role in the schools.

So you say none of the above can be accomplished because you don't have the time. Here is where administrators must step in (we may have to encourage them a little). I have never spoken to a group of regular or special educators who felt they didn't need a specific time to discuss their mainstreamed students. By providing for a specific time (not before school, during your lunch, or after school) during the school day, the administrator is acknowledging the importance of the consultative role of the special educator and the needs of the regular educator. This, coupled with special educators who are aware of the needs of regular educators and compentent in communicating with them, can go a long way toward increasing the success of a mainstreamed program.

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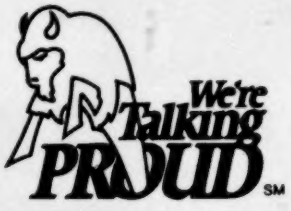

Putting It All Together

Helen Greene, Ed. D.
Dean, School of Education
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The Civil Rights movements of the 60's provided a powerful impetus for many parental special interest groups to press for public education for their children. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act is basically a civil rights act—a human rights act. The reason for providing equal access to educational opportunity for the handicapped is that education is a human right. The parents of handicapped children won the legal battle in 1975, but the accommodations necessary to carry out the mandate have been slow in coming.

As you read the views of professionals with different roles in the educational establishment, it is clear that there is anxiety, frustration and, yes, even anger about the directives of P.L. 94-142.

We are witnessing enormous societal changes. While some of them were certainly predicted, their impact could not be imagined in a realistic way. Nor could we have told in advance what it would be like to do our business in a time of tough choices.

The American population is getting older. Problems of schools are no longer the major concerns of the majority of citizens. They worry about other things. Combine this demographic phenomenon with a time of high inflation, add little money allocated for P.L. 94-142, and you have a formula for trouble. Our problems will not lead themselves to quick solutions.

If we can get most educators and parents to agree that the idea of ending segregation of "normal" and "special" students is morally right, we will have gone a long way (Eschuk, 1979).

We must start with the two major groups—special and regular teachers.

"Just as they ask regular educators to accept and understand the problems of exceptional students, so should special education teachers understand the problems of regular educators. They should see beyond the limited, but nevertheless important, goals of special education and cultivate an appreciation for the goals, aspirations, and expectations of regular educators. Special educators, who themselves are no strangers to various pressures and frustrations, should empathize with the position of regular teachers, who are held more accountable today than ever before in their expertise in teaching basic academic skills to regular students" (Vandivier and Vandivier, 1979).

Colleges and universities have a special role to play. We—through our faculties—are careful observers of what works and what does not. So, we are in a position to snythesize information as it develops, and translate it into effective curriculum and effective teaching techniques.

As Dean of a very large teacher training institution, it became obvious that we had to bring about the necessary changes. But first, we had to start with the needs of our own faculty and Dr. Seidenberg has ably discussed that focus of the Dean's Grant.

As our researchers and curriculum specialists interact and discuss the needs of regular educators, special educators and administrators, this impacts on our course offerings, institutes and workshops and we make a concentrated effort to bring the newest information and techniques to our students—preservice and inservice.

Educators are always concerned with issues of excellence and professional developments. Reynolds (1978) argues that P.L. 94-142 provides the necessary impetus for a concerted reexamination of teacher education, and this should enhance the process of establishing a body of knowledge common to the members of the teaching profession.

Schools of education "exist to develop and disseminate a professional body of knowledge and skills which are suited to the needs of the practitioners who, thereby, will be able to make more intelligent decisions in their professional roles" (Corrigan, 1978).

It is my belief that the faculty and administrators of schools of education must take the lead and help to coordinate the activities which will bring together all the diverse groups to discuss the problems and make the commitment to provide free *appropriate* public education for all children.

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One Parent's View

(Continued from Page 4)

which will hopefully allow him to achieve his potential is something that is difficult to describe.

The process of mainstreaming was for our son a challenge and very exciting. The first couple of days were like an adventure. He was surprised to find that there were things that he did as well or better than the other mainstream students. It was a great ego builder. He was a little upset when one day in school some of the other students asked him why he was in a special class. What was different about him, one other boy questioned him even asked him if he was "gay." He explained with more than a little annoyance that, "No, I am not gay, but I learn in a different way, and when I was younger, I needed to be in a smaller class so that I could learn how I learned and what I needed to do differently than you."

Quite obviously for his family and for our son, mainstreaming has been a positive experience. He has been able to explore, to grow in self-confidence, to accept the fact that he had a learning problem, and to cope with and accept his problem as is evidenced by his comments above. We never knew how really successful the process had been until we were approached by parents of the mainstream school students and they told us what a positive experience our children's mainstreaming had been for their children. Their children were learning by first hand experience that people's sizes are different but that everyone has their own special gifts and abilities and that people who are very different than themselves can be an addition to the world in which they live. Perhaps there is a lesson in this experience for all of us. Children do not need to be locked away. If we allow their peers to have interactions with them our world may be a better place.

A Rose Is A Rose

(Continued from Page 9)

within a school building? Thus, it is not unusual to find 50 or 60 children, handicapped by different disabilities, housed in one wing of a regular school. They rarely if ever see the other wing, or have anything to do with the other children. Sometimes they are not permitted to share the same lunch period in the same lunch room.

Why are these same children maintained in self-contained classrooms with little or no access for movement within the larger school body? Is this restriction of physical movement not contrary to the natural development of children, particularly in adolescence, and not contrary to good educational theory whereby children should be exposed to different educational environments, the library, the science room, the math lab?

If these segregated—mainstreamed children truly need a total school milieu, where all handicapped children congregate and all handicapped children receive all services the school has to offer, why don't they have it,—and lay to bed the farce of mainstreaming?

The answers I feel are four-fold. The first answer is money. With declining school enrollments, the regular schools need special education classes. They need the classes to receive the funding to keep the school going and keep professional staff from losing their jobs. They need the classes, but they don't necessarily want the children.

The second reason is also money. Funding follows diagnosis. Diagnose a child as handicapped and there is weighted money coming in for that child, that state, that locality. One can reach the height of absurdity but nevertheless make a case, as is now being undertaken, for "right brained learning" children who are different, apparently, from the norm of "left brain learning" children.

The third reason again is money. Now that we have diagnosed and classified for which a great deal of money has been spent, there is now a lack of it to spend it where it is truly needed.

If Jose, with his poor speech and his hearing loss needed to be with a group of hearing children, as indeed he did, then Jose also needed the support system to help him through the process. Jose needed his own personal tutor to enter the hearing world with him, to stay with him for a week, a month, six months, until such time as Jose could function alone in that hearing world. That requires a full time teacher for Jose alone and that requires money. Money, however, the surplus of it and the lack of it, are not the only reasons for the farce to continue. For, finally, the last reason is complacency, ignorance, not-rocking-the-boatism mentality of the educational bureaucrats.

Educators are enmeshed in their niches of profundity that are safe. Not the classroom teachers. They struggle valiantly. But the raters and the pencil pushers and the demagogues have built castles of isolation for themselves. Who knows,—perhaps in order for them to know what is going on, they need to be mainstreamed.

Reference

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Mainstreaming: A Teacher's

(Continued from Page 17)

taught by teachers for teachers. They present practical applications of theory as it relates to the needs of classroom teachers educating exceptional students. The after school courses have extended the influence of the Mainstreaming Training Project beyond the limits of Project sites. In some cases the teacher specialist has been invited to visit a neighboring school to give a workshop to teachers as the result of a contact in an after-school course.

It is understood that no after-school course can substitute for the presence of an on-site teacher specialist to assist teachers who are educating exceptional students. What the after-school courses do foster is the collaboration of special and regular educators in planning instructional strategies for their students, thereby translating theory into practice. It is this refinement of teaching skills that enables teachers to model new and more appropriate behaviors to educate all students in their classrooms. One course participants expressed her feelings, "I found myself trying things in the class that I had never attempted before. And when my students said, "I never knew learning could be so much fun," you can imagine how high that made me feel. So the real beneficiaries of the Mainstreaming Training Project for Teachers are the children."

During the Spring of 1980 the Project offered an all day conference called *Mainstreaming: Practical Strategies and Resources* emphasizing the how-to's of mainstreaming. One of those attending the conference was a New York City school paraprofessional who has cerebral palsy. His comments represent a life experience point of view. "It's so important for people to know what it's like for the handicapped. I remember how difficult it was for me to get to be allowed to be a part of things when I went to school. Maybe it will be different for handicapped students now. I know for a fact that with caring and love, many of them can do much more than people think they can. Mainstreaming can prepare those students for life better than anything."

All in all, the Project has been working to give teachers the tools to realistically deal with what is a totally new situation for many and to do so in a way that "democratizes the bureaucracy."

The future direction of these efforts is to create a model program which will provide training for teachers in order to help them learn all they have to know to carry out the mandates of PL. 94-142 effectively.

The spirit of the "Least Restrictive Environment" can be effectively realized when the exceptional student's academic, social and physical needs are assessed and matched with an appropriate educational plan. If this plan includes placement in a regular classroom then it (the plan) is a first step in a process of ongoing evaluation. The determination of a mainstream classroom as the "Least Restrictive Environment" is a goal teachers agree with if that determination responds to the dignity and rights of all the people it effects.

Deep in the Maddening

(Continued from page 19)

include more preparation that has traditionally been the bailiwick of Special Education—both the philosophy and its implemention.

The teachers that are receiving mainstreamed children should be prepared and we should be available to give them support, commendation and appreciation. Not only should teachers be carefully chosen but total class dynamics should be examined as well. Consideration should be given to reducing class size somewhat. Team conferences should be arranged prior to start of classes and ongoing formal and informal feedback should be provided for. Discussions should include general information about what makes this child "tick", level of expectation, and how the program needs to be modified. Since these are children in special programs, it should be possible to cut back on some programs while building requisite skills. Modifications, including those of grading procedures, should be spelled out in the I.E.P.

There should be consistent parameters for behavior throughout a child's program with provisions for the consequences—positive as well as negative—determined ahead of time. The consequences then operate automatically and no one has to act in anger. More importantly, the child learns that *she* controls the outcome of behavior and that these need not be punitive. The children should also know that there is consistency and communication among their teachers—this avoids attempts at manipulation.

Special education children should be prepared for mainstreaming. Role models, carefully screened and prepared, could come into the classrooms as peer tutors. The children could then go for short periods to the regular classrooms. Arrangements could be made for friends at lunch, on the school bus, on trips. Transitional departmentalization as previously discussed should be a very valuable learning experience. The special education teacher should act as resource teacher—structuring organization skills and interpreting the curriculum. And, very importantly, provisions should be made for those days when mainstreaming does not work.

There should be an assessment of what regular teachers need from special education teachers in the way of support. In addition to asking for suggestions, suggest possibilities—taping material, organizing notebooks and reports, providing large size graph paper for organization of arithmetic examples, working on class spelling lists, developing structured overviews of the subject matter, etc. As the child becomes more adept, adapations can be withdrawn. In the meantime, the possibility of failure is reduced.

We, *all* teachers, must be willing to have a strong voice when we LEGITIMATELY feel that "the least

restrictive environment" is really a very restrictive enviornment. We, *all* teachers, should also demand an active role in the placement process. Teacher and parent organizations can be strong advocates here.

We must speak out for a functioning support system, one that will provide appropriate insights to those teachers directly involved. There are differences between appropriate insights and gossip—we need the former and are not interested in the latter.

Special education teachers should meet, share ideas, brainstorm for solutions to problems and program development.

Special education teachers must become integrated members of the total staff. Aside from getting to know lots of nice people, much can be accomplished informally that can never be accomplished by edict. Pick priorities and work on them first.

Our charge is to make the dream a reality. In order to make for effective change, we have to admit there are real problems and not just minor hitches in the implementation of the law.

*Title adopted from a presentation "Far from the Maddening Mainstream" given by Diane King in Boston at the 1980, Orton Society Conference.

Call For Nominations

Nominations are in order for the following NYS-CEC positions. The deadline for receiving nominations is April 30, 1981. Please send all nominations to:

Dr. Richard J. Lee (Past President NYS-CEC)
Chairperson, Nominations/Elections Committee
127 Winston Road
Buffalo, New York 14216

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4. Regional Representative, New York #1 — 1981-1984
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   c. Putnam County
   d. Dutchess County
   e. Ulster County
   f. Sullivan County
   g. Orange County
5. Regional Representative, Long Island #3—1981-1984
   a. Suffolk County
   b. Nassau County

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Indirectly, I received a copy of *The Forum* and read it cover to cover. I found the Fall, 1980, issue very informative and shared various articles with our SLD teachers. I would appreciate any information on your subscription policy so I may receive your publication on a regular basis.

In addition, I was proud to see your Buffalo address since that is my home town, and the field of Learning Disabilities was just emerging when I moved to Florida.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Goodburn
Coordinator
Programs for Specific Learning Disabilities
Hillsborough County Public Schools
Department of Education for Exceptional Students
411 East Henderson Avenue
Tampa, Florida 33602

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White Plains, New York 10605

This form is for those who wish to present at the 1981 CEC Convention. Workshop sessions and creative formats which involve audience participation are particularly solicited. Please complete the form in sufficient detail to permit the committee's evaluation.

The deadline for submission is April 15, 1981.

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_____

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PARTICIPANTS: _____

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Please attach a brief description of the content of the proposed session including the presentation format.

Proposal submitted by:

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